Application No. 09/296,452
Amendment "C" dated July 15, 2003
Reply to Office Action mailed May 12, 2003

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

By this paper, claims 10, 27, 58 and 73 have been amended and new claims 92-93 have been added. Accordingly, claims 6-11, 23-27 and 58-93 remain pending, as reflected below.

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Claims 1 – 5 (cancelled).

6.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the identifying characteristic identifies an episode of a television series included in the video signal.

7.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the identifying characteristic identifies a television series corresponding to the video signal.

8.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the identifying characteristic identifies a television network affiliate providing the video signal.

9.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the identifying characteristic identifies a television network providing the video signal.

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10.   (Currently Amended) In a computer system having a graphical user interface including a display, a method comprising the steps of:

receiving a video signal;

displaying the video signal in a video region on the display;

receiving text communications from one or more viewers of the video signal, the text communications being related to the video signal; and

displaying the received text communications in a chat region on the display with the video signal;

displaying , wherein an identifying characteristic of the video signal is displayed outside of the video and chat regions of the display, wherein the identifying characteristic includes a background underlying at least one of the video region and the chat regionother displayed data.

11.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10 which further comprises the steps of:

determining an identifying characteristic of the video signal; and

defining a user interface for display of the text communications, the user interface being configured to reflect the identifying characteristic of the video signal.

Claims 12 - 22   (Cancelled).

23.   (Previously Presented) The graphical user interface of claim 27, wherein the identifying characteristic is a television series episode.

24.   (Previously Presented) The graphical user interface of claim 27, wherein the identifying characteristic is a television series.

25.   (Previously Presented) The graphical user interface of claim 27, wherein the identifying characteristic is a television network affiliate which broadcasts the video program.

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26.   (Previously Presented) The ~~graphical user interface~~ of claim 27, wherein the identifying characteristic is a television network which broadcasts the video program.

27.   (Currently Amended) A graphical user interface for presentation on a display device, the graphical user interface comprising:

a video region of the display for presentation of a video program having an identifying characteristic; and

a chat region of the display for real-time presentation of text communications between viewers of the video program during viewing of the video program, wherein the appearance of the graphical user interface outside the video region is determined at least in part by an identifying characteristic of the video program, wherein the identifying characteristic is used to determine a background underlying over which other information is displayed at least one of a portion of the video region and a portion of the chat region.

Claims 28 – 57 (Cancelled).

58.   (Currently Amended) In a client system comprising a display for simultaneously showing video programs received from one or more video sources and chat communication corresponding to the received video programs, wherein the client system is capable of connecting to one or more host servers of one or more service providers and one or more chat servers offering one or more chat rooms, a method of a service provider controlling a client system's access to one or more chat rooms that have been associated with a particular video program, comprising:

at the client system, receiving a video program from a video source;

displaying the video program at the client system;

receiving chat link data from the service provider indicating that the client system may display a user selectable chat link for connecting to a chat room that is associated with the video program;

based on the chat link data received from the service provider, displaying the user selectable chat link simultaneously with the video program;

upon receiving user selection of the chat link, sending a chat request to a host server upon selection of the chat link;

receiving a chat room identifier from the host server that identifies the available chat room associated with the video program and a chat server; and

automatically connecting the client system with the chat room that is associated with the video program using the chat room identifier received from the host server.

59.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 58, wherein the host and chat servers are the same server.

60.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 58, wherein the video program and the chat link data are received in a signal broadcast from the video source.

61.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 58, wherein the video program is displayed in a video region of the display and text communications are displayed in a chat region of the display.

62.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 61, wherein the chat region of the display is adjacent the video region of the display.

63.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 61, wherein the chat region of the display overlies the video region of the display.

64.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 61, wherein a chat user interface displayed in the chat region is customized based on one or more of (i) an episode of a television series included in the video program, (ii) a television series corresponding to the video program, (iii) a television network affiliate providing the video program, and (iv) a network providing the video program.

65.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 61, wherein an identifying characteristic of the video program is displayed outside of the video region of the display.

66.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 65, wherein the identifying characteristic identifies an episode of a television series included in the video program.

67.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 65, wherein the identifying characteristic identifies a television series corresponding to the video program.

68.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 65, wherein the identifying characteristic identifies a television network affiliate providing the video program.

69.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 65, wherein the identifying characteristic identifies a television network providing the video program.

70.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 65, wherein the identifying characteristic includes a background underlying other displayed data.

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71.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 58, further comprising the steps of:

determining an identifying characteristic of the video program; and

defining a user interface for display of text communications, the user interface being configured to reflect an identifying characteristic of the video program.

72.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 71, wherein the user interface includes a predefined chat region for display of the text communications.

73.   (Currently Amended) For a client system comprising a display for simultaneously showing video programs received from one or more video sources and chat communication corresponding to the received video programs, wherein the client system is capable of connecting to one or more host servers of one or more service providers and one or more chat servers offering one or more chat rooms, a computer program product comprising computer-executable instructions for implementing a method of a service provider controlling a client system's access to one or more chat rooms that have been associated with a particular video program, the method comprising:

at the client system, receiving a video program from a video source;

displaying the video program at the client system;

receiving chat link data from the service provider indicating that the client system may display a user selectable chat link for connecting to a chat room that is associated with the video program;

based on the chat link data received from the service provider, displaying the user selectable chat link simultaneously with the video program;

upon receiving user selection of the chat link, sending a chat request to a host server upon selection of the chat link;

receiving a chat room identifier from the host server that identifies the available chat room associated with the video program and a chat server; and

automatically connecting the client system with the chat room that is associated with the video program using the chat room identifier received from the host server.

74.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 73, wherein the host and chat servers are the same server.

75.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 73, wherein the video program and the chat link data are received in a signal broadcast from the video source.

76.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 73, the method further comprising displaying the video program in a video region of the display and text communications in a chat region of the display.

77.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 76, wherein the chat region of the display is adjacent the video region of the display.

78.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 76, wherein the chat region of the display overlies the video region of the display.

79.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 76, wherein an identifying characteristic of the video program is displayed outside of the video region of the display.

80.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 79, wherein the identifying characteristic identifies an episode of a television series included in the video program.

81.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 79, wherein the identifying characteristic identifies a television series corresponding to the video program.

82.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 79, wherein the identifying characteristic identifies a television network affiliate providing the video program.

83.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 79, wherein the identifying characteristic identifies a television network providing the video program.

84.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 79, wherein the identifying characteristic includes a background underlying other displayed data.

85.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 73, the method further comprising:

determining an identifying characteristic of the video program; and

defining a user interface for display of text communications, the user interface being configured to reflect the identifying characteristic of the video program.

86.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 85, wherein the user interface includes a predefined chat region for display of the text communications.

87.   (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 86, wherein the user interface includes a predefined video region for display of the video program.

88.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the chat region of the display is adjacent the video region of the display.

89.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the chat region of the display overlies the video region of the display.

90.   (Previously Presented) The graphical user interface of claim 27, wherein the chat region of the display is adjacent the video region of the display.

91.   (Previously Presented) The graphical user interface of claim 27, wherein the chat region of the display overlies the video region of the display.

92.   (New) A method as recited in claim 58, wherein the video program has a beginning and an end, and further including an act of displaying a new chat link with the video program, and prior to the end of the video program, the new chat link linking to new chat room that is associated with a different video program.

93.   (New) A method as recited in claim 58, wherein the chat room is maintained by the chat server only until the user leaves the chat room, wherein the user is determined to be a last participant to leave the chat room.